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FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL CHAIR.

Wellington greeted the delegates to the New Zealand Library Association Conference with a genial smile, and sunshine, while those of us from the South had been fortunate in having a very quiet trip from Lyttelton. The social gathering at Hotel St. George was a pleasant function, at which it was good to meet old friends again, to make new ones, and discuss with them some of the problems that beset librarians. Wednesday morning, the 17th, found over 60 delegates assembled together in the Parliament Buildings, and, after registration, a photo was taken of the delegates.

Councillor W. J. Gaudin, President of the Library Association, then gave his address, touching on salient library features, local and general. The Hon. P. Fraser also spoke and was eloquent in his advocacy of the National Library Scheme, the delegates listening with close attention to his remarks. The question of regional committees was briefly discussed and later, the Auckland, Wellington, and Dunedin Societies of Librarians were recognised as branches of the New Zealand Library Association.

Mr E. J. Bell (Canterbury Public Library) gave an instructive address on "Modern Issue Systems," and demonstrated the development from the early methods up to the present. Mr E. B. Ellerm (Leys' Institute) gave an exhaustive review on "Children's Books and Libraries in Retrospect." This was most interesting and covered a wide range. We hope to make use of portions of this excellent paper in our "Gazette" in the near future. A talk by Prof. Shelley that evening on "Broadcasting Libraries, and Adult Education," was much enjoyed by all present.

The symposium on "Library Ideals—How They Are Being Realised" was taken part in, by Mr T. D. Hall, Clerk of the House of Representatives, who chose as his theme, "The National Scheme in General"; by Dr. G. H. Scholefield, O.B.E., who spoke on "The Place of the General Assembly Library in the National Scheme"; by Mr J. Barr, Auckland, who dealt with "The Rural Library in the National Scheme," and Mr A. Dunningham, Librarian Dunedin, whose paper was entitled "The City Library in the National Scheme."

During the afternoon the delegates were the guests of the General Assembly and the Alexander Turnbull Libraries, in a tour in the tramway bus. This was very enjoyable, visits being made to General Assembly, Turnbull, Newtown, Lyall Bay, and Mirimar Libraries; afternoon tea being sandwiched in between at the Kelburn Tea Kiosk.

Mr E. E. Wiltshire later suggested that as it was possible "New Zealand Authors' Week" would not be continued, in its place the Conference consider the proposal to have a New Zealand Library Week to be organised by local Committees, the whole to be under the auspices of the N.Z. Library Association.

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The Report and Balance Sheet, election of officers and other business took some considerable time, so that it was at a very late hour that Mr G. T. Alley, Librarian of the Association for Country Education, was called upon to read his paper on "Country Libraries and Their Problems." Though he omitted much, and condensed other portions, it was a very late hour when he concluded. The paper was one of intense interest and it was most regrettable that it was placed as concluding item on the agenda.

During the sessions several committees were formed, and remits were there aplenty. The mutilation of magazines by the censor was discussed and the attention of the Government will be drawn to this quite unnecessary action of Customs officials.

Altogether it was a busy time and the agenda disclosed the fact of there having been much spade work done during this last year or so. As the Conference decided that the next one should take place in twelve months at Nelson, it seems a fair inference to assume that possibly still greater progress will be shown at that gathering.

We have received the first number of "Book News," the journal of the New Plymouth Public Library. It contains eight pages within a tasty coloured cover, giving it a distinctive appearance. The reading matter occupies a fair space, the paper is good and the type clear, while the lay-out gives prominence to the articles and news. The accession lists will be welcome to subscribers. We sincerely congratulate those responsible for its production and trust it will have a long and successful life.

BOOKS WORTH READING.

Which Way To Peace, by Bertrand Russell. A book worth reading, and, then again. Though an ardent pacifist, he recognises that the present condition of world affairs cannot be swept aside with a scornful denunciation of war. Today too closely resembles 1914, and his attitude he defines thus: "My belief in absolute pacifism is limited to the present time and depends upon the destructiveness of air warfare." He holds that no war is worth while and sums it up with the question, Can we imagine any great modern war which would do more good than harm? His reasoning is clear and logical, for if all men saw as he does then there would have been no cause for the book. This book should be helpful to many, perhaps most of all to those who are pacifist, but are troubled by the existing state of things.

It Happened In Palestine, by Leslie D. Weatherhead. Mr Weatherhead has here given us yet another of his fine books. Dealing with many of the events and happenings in the life of our Lord, he has entered into the spirit of both the time and place thus giving us a picture and interpretation that draws us with him. The association of Jesus and humour will to many be new, but the author's reverent attitude makes it none the less acceptable. "It Happened In Palestine" is another link in an earnest, thoughtful chain of books.